

REMARKS

Applicants have canceled Claim 1, amended Claims 2, 8, 11, 14, 22, and 23, and added Claims 46-59 and therefore, upon entry of this amendment, Claims 2-59 are pending. Applicants note that Claims 16-45 have been allowed by Examiner. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and reexamination of the application.

Claims 3-8, 10, and 13-15 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but Examiner indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have rewritten Claim 8 in independent form to include the limitations of the respective base claim (Claim 1), as suggested by Examiner, and have amended Claims 2, 11, and 22 to depend on Claim 8 (Claim 22 is also dependent upon allowed Claim 16). Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 8 is in proper form for allowance and that Claims 2-7, 9-15, and 22, which ultimately depend on Claim 8 (with Claim 22 also dependent upon allowed Claim 16), are also in proper form for allowance. Accordingly, any of the following remarks regarding distinctions over the prior art do not apply to the just-described claims.

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,300,616, to Regensburger [herein referred to as "Regensburger"], Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Regensburger in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,359,460 to Tanaka [herein referred to as "Tanaka"], Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Regensburger in view of Tanaka and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,267,501 to Wand et al. [herein referred to as "Wand"], and Claims 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Regensburger in view of U.S. Publication 2003/0006374 to McManus [herein referred to as "McManus"].

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Applicants have amended Claim 8 to include the limitations of canceled Claim 1 to place Claim 8 in proper form for allowance, as indicated by Examiner. Claims 2, 9, 11, and 12 now ultimately depend on Claim 8 and, therefore, are also in proper form for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claims 1, 2, 9, 11, and 12 be withdrawn.

Applicants have amended Claims 14 and 23, with the amendments made simply to correct a typographical error or a grammatical error and directed to form. Therefore, the amendment to Claims 14 and 23 do not narrow the scope of the claims.

Applicants have added new dependent Claims 46-59, which are dependent upon Claims 8, 16, 23, 36, or 43. Because Claims 8, 16, 23, 36, and 43 are in condition for allowance, as discussed above, Applicants submit that Claims 46-59 are also in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claims 2-59 are in proper form for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested and a timely Notice of Allowance is solicited. If there are any questions regarding any aspect of the application, please call the undersigned at (949) 752-7040.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on April 27, 2004.



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Date of Signature

Respectfully submitted,



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